

DRAFT MINUTES  
Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust  
July 21, 2016

Members present: Marc Johnson, Bill Wilson, Michael Lombardo, and Russ Tanzer.

Town Officials and staff present: Patrick Reffett, Director of Planning and Inspections and Dorr Fox, Community Projects Coordinator.

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Michael Lombardo called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

#### MINUTES

Bill Wilson moved to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2016 meeting. Mr. Lombardo seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved

#### SELECTION OF CHAIR

Marc Johnson stated that he was interested in serving as chair of the Trust. Russ Tanzer nominated Peter Britton to serve as chair. The topic was tabled until the next meeting when Peter Britton was expected to be in attendance. Mr. Johnson was selected to chair the July 21, 2016 meeting. He welcomed Mr. Tanzer and Mr. Wilson as new members of the Trust.

#### REVIEW OF TOWN OWNED SITES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Dorr Fox and Patrick Reffett stated that town staff had done a survey of town-owned parcels. Most of the parcels had barriers to development such as a lack of vehicular access, wetlands, they were already used for another municipal purpose or they were conservation land. There were a few parcels with development potential. However, they needed further analysis. The survey included a map of the parcels as well as a spreadsheet. Mr. Johnson projected the town's GIS website and suggested that the Trust review some of the parcels that looked promising for affordable housing.

##### Parcels on Lake Shore Drive

The Trust reviewed a cluster of town-owned parcels off Lake Shore Drive that also fronted onto Chebacco Lake. Together they comprise one acre of land. There had been a ten year restriction on development that expired several years in the past. The Trust determined that this land could be better used for a different use, such as a park.

##### Land owned by the Hamilton Wenham Land Trust

It was questioned whether land owned by the Hamilton Wenham Land Trust could be developed. It was concluded that this land is conservation land that could not be developed for affordable housing.

### Land behind the Public Safety Building

The Trust discussed land comprising 1.5 acres that is located behind the public safety building. It was stated that several units (possibly 15 to 20) could be built upon the site. It was noted that the town was planning to put a cell tower on this site and that a portion of the site is currently being used as a septic system for the public safety building. It was noted that access would be through the town owned parcels because it was doubtful that there would be access onto Locust Street, even though there was frontage on Locust Street. It was determined that this land might be one of the most feasible sites for affordable housing in the town. The Trust needs to discuss the potential for affordable housing and access to the site with the school district, the police department, the fire department and the larger community. Town staff should look further into this site. The Town could hire a consulting firm with a development background to analyze the site.

### Senior Center site

The Trust discussed the current site of the Hamilton Council on Aging as a possible site for affordable senior housing. It was thought that between the senior center site and the site behind the public safety building, twenty four units of affordable housing could be built. It was discussed that the two projects could be considered together. It was discussed that the senior center building could be raised and a building containing both a senior center and affordable housing could be built on the site. It was discussed that abutters should be notified of an upcoming meeting to discuss this site.

### Cutler Park

It was determined that this site would not be suitable for affordable housing since there may be a conservation restriction on the land.

### Lot off Central Avenue

It was noted that there is no access through Harris Avenue, since the road has been abandoned and is now owned by the abutters. However, there should be access through Central Avenue. The staff will look further into this site. Mr. Fox will speak with Habitat of Humanity regarding their previous efforts to develop the site.

### Town Dump site

Mr. Lombardo stated that the site is not appropriate for affordable housing for several reasons. Mr. Reffett stated that the DEP regulations require clean soil for housing. It was determined that the staff will not look into this parcel.

### Comments from Andrew DeFranza

Mr. DeFranza stated that Harborlight can work with small parcels of land, however, it is difficult to get financing for projects under eight units. He stated that sites in town are best and sites with wetlands are generally not good. He stated that he likes

the bio-filter septic systems because there is always a challenge regarding how many units can be put on a site due to wastewater issues.

## REVIEW OF PRIVATELY OWNED SITES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

### Surrey Lane site

The Trust discussed a large site off Surrey Lane that is currently for sale. It was determined that the site is far from downtown Hamilton, has limited access, has a varied topography and a portion of the property contains wetlands. The site consists of 32 acres, of which five acres are dry and buildable. The site is a Chapter 61 property which gives the Town first right to purchase it. It is also located in a corridor that the Town is protecting, including the Sagamore Hill site and the Donovan site. It was determined that the Town staff should not look further into the site as a potential location for affordable housing.

### Dodge Tree Service site

The Trust discussed the site on Willow Street currently owned by Dodge Tree Service. While the site may be an appropriate site for affordable housing due to its location, it is currently occupied by a viable business. In order to locate housing on the site, there needs to be a willing seller. Financing of the site could be tied into the redevelopment of the senior center site. There are concerns regarding the cost of the site in relation to possible density. There also may be 21E issues on the site pertaining to hazardous materials. The Trust determined that the staff could discuss the site with the Hamilton Development Corporation.

### Property in Wenham on Hamilton town line

The Trust discussed a property in Wenham that is on the Hamilton town line adjacent to downtown Hamilton. It was determined that even if this site was developed as affordable housing, the units would count towards Wenham's percentage of affordable housing.

### 59/63 Willow Street

The Trust discussed the Hamilton Development Corporation's site on Willow Street as a potential location for affordable housing as part of the planned mixed use development project. It was determined that Mr. Fox would ask the HDC to discuss this possibility at their next meeting.

### Longmeadow site

The Trust noted that the Phase 1 site at Longmeadow Way is still under consideration. While the size of the project may be too large, the site still may be appropriate for affordable housing.

## TOWN CITIZEN'S COMMITTEE

Mr. Lombardo stated that he saw no need for a citizen's advisory committee. Rosemary Kennedy stated that there were a lot of knowledgeable people in Hamilton that could give advice to existing boards and committees. Mr. Tanzer noted that there are already several people in town that are looking into these issues. Conway Felton stated that it is good to have citizens look into affordable housing, however, he prefers to do it informally and not within the confines of an appointed committee. Ms. Kennedy stated that she prefers to have a more formal approach. It was concluded that Ms. Kennedy and Mr. Felton would continue to discuss the topic and report back to the Trust. There has been no subcommittee created at this time.

## DISCUSSION OF DEFINING A MISSION FOR EXTERNAL CONSULTANT

It was determined that the Town could hire a consultant who would further evaluate properties after the Trust did an initial evaluation.

## REVIEW OF HOME LOAN GRANT PROGRAM

The committee noted that this was a concept brought forth by MaryBeth Lawton at the last meeting and that it was best not to follow through with the program. The program would have consisted of giving grants for home repairs in exchange for affordable housing restrictions.

## NEW BUSINESS

The Trust decided to meet on Wednesday, August 3, 2016 and Wednesday, August 17, 2016. It was also determined that there should be postings on Facebook regarding meetings and availability of minutes. The meeting minutes should be posted on the town website as a draft soon after the meeting.

Mr. Wilson made a motion to adjourn at 8:17 p.m. Mr. Lombardo seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.